meeting working capital requirements and also for payment of wages and gratuity.

2. M/s Burn Standard Co. Ltd. (BSCL):— All the employees, barring those in Raniganj and Gulfarbari Units, have been paid wages upto June, 1995. Payment has been made in Raniganj unit upto fortnight ending 17.6.95 and in Gulfarbari unit upto fortnight ending 10.6.95. The Deptt. of Heavy Industry has submitted a proposal to Ministry of Finance for release of funds to BSCL for payment of wages.

3. Reyrolle Burn Ltd. (RBL):— The employees have been paid wages and salary upto June, 1995.

4. National Textile Corporation (NTC):— Out of 9 units, wages have been paid upto date in 7 units. In two units, fifteen days' wages are yet to be paid.

5. National Jute Manufactures Corporation (NJMC)i— Wages have been paid upto date.

Shortage of Coal

*113. SHRI G.G. SWELL:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that stock shortage of coal during 1991-92 was worth Rs.130.79 crores and the figures rose to Rs.234 crores and 250 crores during 1992-93 and 1993-94 respectively; and

(b) if so, what action has been contempla'ted in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) As per the audited accounts of Coal India limited and its subsidiary companies, the value of shortage of coal for the year 1991-92 to 1993-94 is as follows:—

1991-92	Rs. 146.42 crores
1992-93	Rs. 42.82 crores
1993-94	Rs. 69.10 crores

(b) Provision has been made in the audited accounts and profit and loss statements for these shortages.

Action to fix responsibility for the shortages as per the established procedures of Coal India Limited has been initiated.

Reaction of International Market to Imports by India

*114. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that whenever India has announced its intention to import any item in bulk, international market has reacted adversely by hiking the price of that item;

(b) whether Government have identified the reasons for such a reaction; and

(c) whether any procedure is being evolved to avoid such reactions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE' MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Any bulk import of commodities by India or any other large country is likely to have an impact on the international markets/ prices depending on the supply elasticity, demand pattern of other major importers, the type of products, etc. The transparency and openness in the procedure adopted by India in effecting such purchases can be expected to influence the market sentiment whenever bulk purchase operations are undertaken by public sector organisations.

(c) As part of the liberalisation process under way, items of mass consumption such as pulses sugar and edible oil have

been put in the OGL category in the Exim Policy.

Decline in Offtake from PDS

*115 SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the offtake from the Public Distribution System has declined to about 13 million tonnes, compared to 20.8 million tonnes in 1991; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) and (b) The offtake of rice and wheat from the Public Distribution System (PDS) was 18.7 million tonnes in 1991. In the year 1994, the total offtake of rice and wheat was around 13 million tonnes. The lower offtake of foodgrains from the PDS is due to various factors such as continued local availability of foodgrains on account of high production of wheat, rice and coarse grains in three consecutive crop years since 1992-93 and the narrow gap between the PDS retail price and open market prices in many parts of the country.

Steps to Protect Interests of Rubber Growers

*116. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to allow duty free import of 50,000 tonnes of natural rubber in 1995-96;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to protect the interests of rubber growers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM):

(a) to (c) Since early 1995, persistent reports were received by the govt, of a gap between demand and supply of nature rubber in the domestic market leading to depletion of stocks. Moreover, there was a steep increase in prices reaching an all time high at Rs.6,550 per quintal for RSS-IV in mid-June, 1995 as compared to Rs.2,851 per quintal in June, 1994. After considering all relevant factors and the view points of all concerned including Rubber Board, growers and user industries, Govt, permitted import of 38,450 tonnes of natural rubber by 31-8-95 to ensure edequate availability and to stabilise the domestic market during the current lean season.

To protect the interest of Rubber Growers, Rubber Board has been implementing successfully various development and R&D schemes to increase production and productivity of rubber in order to minimise the need for import.

Foreign Exchange Earned Through Export of Consultancy Services

*117. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI:
SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:

WiU the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total foreign exchange earned through export of consultancy services during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the consultancy services operating under public and private sectors in the country are facing crisis due to foreign consultatns in each of the foreign aided projects;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether a conference on the development of consultancy trade in the developing countries was organised by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation in Geneva;

(e) if so, the details of main recommendations made therein; and

(f) the reaction of Government thereon?